United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Geneva, has meetings with President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Special Envoy for Yemen and Special Representative for Burundi.

+ Assistant Secretary-General Riza says it will be difficult to get political talks started in Rwanda; Secretary-General's Military Adviser says first phases of UNAMIR could soon be deployed, but shortage of resources and continuing hostilities present serious obstacles.

+ Special Representative Akashi holds second round of talks with Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serbs in Geneva; parties disagree over duration of cease-fire.

+ South Asian and Pacific regional preparatory meeting for 1995 World Conference on Women begins in Jakarta.

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Continuing his visit to Geneva, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today with Lakhdar Brahimi, his Special Envoy and Head of the United Nations fact-finding mission to Yemen. He appealed to the parties there to abide by the Security Council's call for an immediate cease-fire, and to resume peace talks without delay. The Secretary-General expressed concern at the humanitarian situation in Aden, and has instructed the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and other United Nations offices to respond with emergency action. Mr. Brahimi left for Yemen immediately after the meeting.

The Secretary-General then met with President Kresimir Zubak of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Vice-President Ejup Ganic, to review the current cease-fire talks in Geneva. He later met with the Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), General Bertrand de Lapresle, and the UNPROFOR Commander in Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Michael Rose.

The Secretary-General also met with Special Representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, who had just arrived from Burundi. They discussed the political situation there, and the report of the preparatory fact-finding mission,

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comprising Ambassadors Siméon Aké of Côte d'Ivoire and Martin Huslid of Norway. The Secretary-General said he was grateful for Burundi's assistance in dealing with the crisis in Rwanda. He was later scheduled to meet with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso, to discuss the situation in Rwanda.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will attend a ceremony to be held by the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) marking the first compensation payment for claims resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

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The Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, Iqbal Riza, today reiterated the need for a cease-fire and a political settlement in Rwanda, and stressed that success would depend on the will of the parties. However, he told correspondents at Headquarters, contacts between them had only been at the military level to date, and it would be difficult to get political talks started. The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) was unwilling to negotiate with the interim Government because of its involvement in massacres and the question of its legitimacy, while the internal dynamics of the Government side were unclear. "We really don't know who's taking orders from whom," he added.

The Secretary-General's Military Adviser, General Maurice Baril, said he hoped that phases 1 and 2 of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) could soon be deployed. However, it was not yet clear what resources would be available. Ghana and Senegal had each offered one mechanized infantry battalion, but without mechanized equipment, while Ethiopia and Zimbabwe had both offered a battalion. Nigeria, Congo and Mali had each pledged a company of infantry, and Namibia had contributed $500,000. The United States would supply 50 armoured personnel carriers, and various States had offered aircraft, but logistical, maintenance and medical support was still required.

Meanwhile, fighting was continuing on the ground, and Kigali airport had been closed as a result of shelling on Sunday, according to General Baril. Attempts were being made to open up a road corridor from Uganda, and it was possible that UNAMIR could be supplied by air from Zaire and Burundi.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi today held another round of bilateral talks with the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serb authorities in Geneva, according to a United Nations spokesman. The main obstacle to an agreement concerned the duration of a cease-fire, with the Bosnian Government favouring a shorter time period than the Bosnian Serbs.

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Meanwhile, the situation in Gorazde remained stable after an exchange of gun-fire between Government and Bosnian Serb forces, the spokesman said. Fighting also flared up north-west of Tuzla, where there had been intense shelling of Government positions by Serb forces in recent days.

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The first of five regional preparatory meetings for the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women began in Jakarta, Indonesia, today. The week-long Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development will develop a plan of action for the advancement of women in the region. It will also review progress since the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women was adopted by the General Assembly last year. Other issues to be considered will include women's access to education, participation in the labour force, and political and economic empowerment.

Ministers, senior officials and representatives from non-governmental organizations of 50 countries are expected to attend the meeting, which is being organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Indonesian Government. The results of the five preparatory conferences will be incorporated into the Platform for Action for the World Conference on Women in Beijing.

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